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The Courier-Journal (Louisville, Kentucky)

April 19, 2008 Saturday
METRO Edition

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1B

LENGTH: 427 words

HEADLINE: U.S. to review refugee's status

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BODY:

Ky. delegation backs

Transylvania student

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A federal agency has reopened the case of a Sudanese refugee who was denied residency in the United States because of his association with a terrorist group that abducted him 16 years ago.

The attorney for Lino Nakwa said U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth's office informed her yesterday that the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service is reconsidering its decision, which sparked outrage on the campus of Transylvania University, where Nakwa is a successful and popular student.

"This is great news," said the lawyer, Teresa Powell, of Kentucky Refugee Ministries.

A spokeswoman for the agency, Mary Lou Cabrera, confirmed that it is reconsidering its denial of a green card for Nakwa, which could have led to his deportation.

Nakwa has won other allies in Congress, including Sens. Jim **Bunning** and Mitch McConnell and U.S. Rep. Ben Chandler, as he fights to stay in the United States.

The Courier-Journal reported last week that the immigration agency had denied residency to Nakwa because he received "military-type training" from a terrorist group in 1992. The denial came even though the agency conceded that

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Nakwa and his brothers were "forced to attend" the training camp and that Nakwa was there only a month.

In his asylum papers, Nakwa said he was abducted at gunpoint as a 12-year-old by the **Sudan** People's Liberation Army, which killed his father, then ran away.

After years in refugee camps in Kenya, Nakwa was admitted to this country as a victim of persecution in 2003 and raised four younger siblings in Louisville while working his way through community college. Now, he's on the dean's list at Transylvania, where students and faculty started a letter-writing campaign on his behalf after hearing that he might be forced to leave the country .

Chandler and McConnell, the Senate minority leader, announced that they've sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff urging him to review the case. Powell said **Bunning's** office notified her that he also had contacted Chertoff on Nakwa's behalf.

In a press release, Chandler, D-6th District, said: "The outpouring of support for Mr. Nakwa has been extraordinary. Knowing what this young man has been through, Senator McConnell and I are doing all we can to ensure that he is treated fairly and that his personal safety remains a top priority."

McConnell, a Republican said, "Many throughout Kentucky have been touched by the story of Lino Nakwa."

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LOAD-DATE: April 22, 2008